



The Book of Delights

Book Club Kit

Discussion Questions

- 1) The Book of Delights is structured as a series of short essays written over a year. How did this format affect your reading experience? Did you find it engaging or challenging?
- 2) Gay's concept of "delight" isn't just about joy—it often includes moments of grief, reflection, and deep observation. How does he balance these emotions?
- 3) The author discusses race, masculinity, and social interactions in subtle and explicit ways. How did these reflections shape your understanding of delight?
- 4) Was there a particular essay that resonated with you the most? Why?
- 5) Were there any delights that surprised you or made you see something familiar in a new way?
- 6) Gay challenged himself to write every day about delight. Have you ever taken on a daily creative or reflective practice, such as journaling or sketching? If so, how did it shape your perspective?
- 7) The author often describes moments of connection with strangers. Have you had similar experiences in public spaces like the library, a park, or a coffee shop?
- 8) Did this book change your perspective on what it means to experience and express joy? If so, how?

These questions were developed with help from AI.



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Author Information: Ross Gay



Ross Gay

Photo by Natasha Komoda

About Ross Gay

Ross Gay is an award-winning poet and essayist known for his explorations of joy, community, and the beauty found in everyday life. Born in 1974 in Youngstown, Ohio, and raised in Levittown, Pennsylvania, Gay's work often reflects his deep appreciation for nature, human connection, and the power of small moments.

Gay is the author of several acclaimed poetry collections, including *Against Which* (2006), *Bringing the Shovel Down* (2011), and *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* (2015), which won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award.

In addition to poetry, Gay has written celebrated essay collections. His bestselling *The Book of Delights* (2019) is a series of daily reflections on joy, wonder, and the unexpected delights of everyday life. This project inspired his later works, *Inciting Joy* (2022), which explores how joy emerges in times of difficulty, and *The Book of (More) Delights* (2023), a continuation of his reflections on the small, meaningful moments that shape our lives. Beyond writing, Gay is a professor of English at Indiana University and a founding board member of The Bloomington Community Orchard, a nonprofit that promotes food justice and community engagement.

About *The Book of Delights*

Ross Gay's *The Book of Delights* is a joyful, thought-provoking collection of short, lyrical essays that capture the beauty of everyday life. Published in 2019, *The Book of Delights* became a bestseller and was widely praised for its uplifting spirit and insightful commentary. It has been featured in major publications like The New York Times and NPR, and it has inspired readers to seek out and celebrate their own daily delights.

Sources

- "About Ross," <https://www.rossgay.net/about>
- Wikipedia, "Ross Gay," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ross_Gay
- Cultivating Place Foundation, <https://www.cultivatingplace.org/post/2019/11/28/unabashed-gratitude-structures-of-care-with-poet-gardener-ross-gay>

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